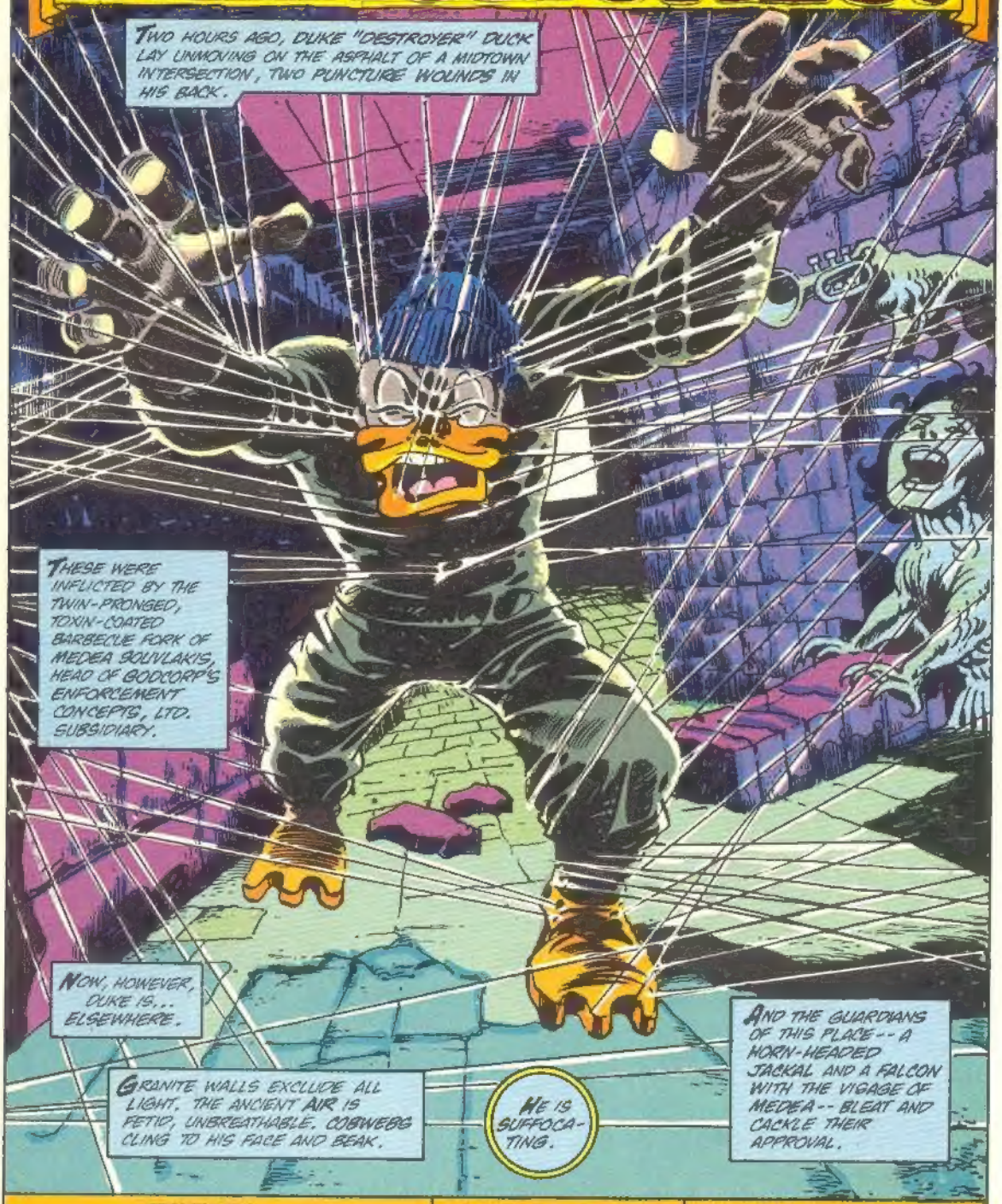
ECLIPSE COMICS™
MARAUDING MALLARD OF VENGEANCE!
$1.50 in USA
3
$1.75 in Canada
DESTROYER DUCK™
Plus
THE STARLING™
by Jerry Siegel
and Val Mayerik

DESTROYER DUCK!

MANSLAYING MALLARD ON A MISSION OF VENGEANCE!

PHEROMONES!


TWO HOURS AGO, DUKE "DESTROYER" DUCK LAY UNMOVING ON THE ASPHALT OF A MIDTOWN INTERSECTION, TWO PUNCTURE WOUNDS IN HIS BACK.
THESE WERE INFLICTED BY THE TWIN-PRONGED, TOXIN-COATED BARBECUE FORK OF MEDEA SOUVLAKIS, HEAD OF GODCORP'S ENFORCEMENT CONCEPTS, LTD. SUBSIDIARY.
NOW, HOWEVER, DUKE IS... ELSEWHERE.
GRANITE WALLS EXCLUDE ALL LIGHT. THE ANCIENT AIR IS FETID, UNBREATHABLE. COBWEBS CLING TO HIS FACE AND BEAK.
HE IS SUFFOCATING.
AND THE GUARDIANS OF THIS PLACE -- A HORN-HEADED JACKAL AND A FALCON WITH THE VISAGE OF MEDEA -- BLEAT AND CACKLE THEIR APPROVAL.

CREATED BY
STEVE GERBER & JACK KIRBY
WRITER ARTIST

ALFREDO ALCALA
INKER

ADAM KUBERT - LETTERER
PETRA SCOTESE - COLORIST
THOM ENRIQUEZ-BEAK CONSULTANT

THE SOUND IS NOT UNLIKE THAT OF THE TRAFFIC AT 61ST STREET AND THIRD AVENUE--AN INTERSECTION IN THE THROES OF GRIDLOCK.
THE DRIVER OF A SURROUNDED ANIMAL SHELTER TRUCK PRESSES HIS FULL WEIGHT AGAINST THE SPOKES OF HIS STEERING WHEEL.
CITY OF NEW YORK ANIMAL SHELTER
HIS HORN BLARES LOUD AND LONG...
...TO THE EXTREME IRRITATION OF HIS CARGO.
THE DOBERMAN MISTOOK ITS NOW-NOSELESS OWNER FOR A BURGLAR THIS MORNING. THE BANTAM WAS RESCUED FROM AN UPPER WEST SIDE VOODOO ALTAR.
THE DUCK WAS STABBED, PRESUMABLY TO DEATH, IN A STREETFIGHT.
SO THEY ZIPPED HIM INTO A BODY BAG AND HAULED HIM AWAY... PREMATURELY.
AND THE CLINGING PLASTIC, THE DOG, THE ROOSTER'S CROWING, AND THE HORN FOUND ANALOGUES IN DUKE'S DRUG-INDUCED NIGHTMARE.
YES, IT WAS ALL A DREAM ...EXCEPT THE PART ABOUT ASPHYXIATION.
:QUAAAGH:
:GASP: PROMISED MYSELF--IN 'NAM--WOULDN'T BE CAUGHT DEAD--IN ONE'A THESE--!
DAMNED :GASP: IF I'LL WEAR ONE--ALIVE--!!
RRRRROWRRR
LIKED ME BETTER AS A STIFF, HUH, POOCH?
WELL, LIFE'S FULL OF LITTLE DISAPPOINTMENTS. JUST SNARL AND BEAR IT.
THE DOOR-LATCH SLIPS ...AND WITH PAVLOVIAN SUDDENNESS--
KRRASHHHH
--THE DOBERMAN GOES BERSERK, LAUNCHING ITSELF THROUGH THE BARS OF ITS CAGE--
2

--STRAIGHT FOR THE WATERFOWL'S THROAT!!
THE IMPACT SLAMS DUKE AGAINST THE DOOR WITH SUCH FORCE...
...THAT DOG AND DUCK TUMBLE OUT OF THE TRUCK...
GNNOOWRRGH
POW!
...AND ONTO THE HOOD OF THE CONTINENTAL DIRECTLY BEHIND IT!
DUKE'S ROADHOUSE RIGHT STUNS THE CANINE MOMENTARILY, BUT...
HE'S STILL COMIN'!! I DON'T BELIEVE IT! THAT PUNCH PUT WILDEBEESTS TO SLEEP BACK HOME--!
VEGGIES! FRESH FROOT! YOGUHT! TRAIL MIX!
NEW YORK POST
FAG FOOD! WHY'D DA BOTTOM HAVETA DROP OUTTA CHILI DOGS...?
SALAD
ONE FLYING TACKLE LATER...
THWAM
...THE BOTTOM, TOP, AND ALL FOUR SIDES DROP OUT OF MACROBIOTICS, AS WELL.
HEY!!
3

YA MORON!! WHY DON'TCHA WATCH WHERE YER JOGGIN'?! I'M GONNA BREAK YER GODDAM LEGS!!
GRRROWWR
BEFORE OR AFTER FIDO CHEWS 'EM OFF...?
OOOHOOR
BACK OFF, BUSTER! I ALREADY PAID FOR MY MISTAKE!
THOK!
I GOT AN ACCIDENTAL TASTE OF YOUR RANCH DRESSING!

DAMMIT! CAN'T-- STAND UP STRAIGHT! TOXIN--STILL IN MY SYSTEM! GOTTA LOSE THIS BLASTED MUTT --AND FAST--
--OR I MIGHT AS WELL CURL UP IN HIS DOGGY DISH AN' DIE!
RRAGGH
AAAH-- SHUT UP!

C'MON LEGS--ONE LAST BURST OF SPEED! JUST ENOUGH--TO REACH THAT-- FIRE ESCAPE--!

MADE IT! OUR DINNER DATE'S OFF!
RRAARRGH

NOW IF I CAN JUST FIND A NICE, QUIET SPOT TO CATCH MY--
HMM. WINDOW OPEN. NOTHING MOVING INSIDE.
TENANT'S PROBABLY OUT ROBBING SOMEBODY.
PLACE SHOULD BE GOOD FOR A FEW MINUTES REST, ANYWAY.
BUT INSIDE, A STARTLING SIGHT GREETS THE MARAUDING MALLARD...
MILTON...?!
NO...IT'S A TELEPHONE SHAPED LIKE MILTON...!
THIS WHOLE BLINKIN' JOINT IS FULL OF TELEPHONES--
--AND NOT ONE OF 'EM'S CONNECTED!
WHAT KINDA COCKEYED LOONEY WOULD...?
BERYL? IS THAT YOU?
I WAS VOIDING. I DIDN'T HEAR Y-- OH.
YOU'RE NOT BERYL. SORRY, I THOUGHT YOU WERE BERYL.
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ARE YOU HERE TO STEAL FROM ME... OR KILL ME, OR ANYTHING?
NAH.
WELL, THAT'S A RELIEF. COULD YOU USE A NEW PHONE?
UH... NOT REALLY, NO.
PHONE

WHAT A SHAME. I WORK FOR THE PHONE COMPANY. I GET AN EMPLOYEE DISCOUNT.
I BOUGHT ALL THESE AS GIFTS FOR PEOPLE--THEN I REALIZED I DIDN'T KNOW ANY PEOPLE.
BY THE WAY, MY NAME IS BRAD WHITE. NICE TO MEET YOU.
TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
DUKE DUCK.

UH, BRAD... THERE'S A CORPORATION AND A DOG ON MY TAIL. I NEED TO LAY LOW FOR A WHILE...
YOU CAME TO THE RIGHT PLACE, DUKE. NOBODY KNOWS I'M ALIVE. THEY'LL NEVER FIND YOU HERE.
CARE FOR SOME COFFEE?
UH...

ACTUALLY, I EXAGGERATED. ONE PERSON KNOWS I'M ALIVE. BERYL MUDGE. SHE LIVES UPSTAIRS. I HAVE A CRUSH ON HER.
IN FACT, I BOUGHT HER A VERY SPECIAL PHONE--'CAUSE SHE'S LIKE MY VERY OWN VANILLA CUPCAKE.
TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
YEAH? PERSONALLY, I'M PARTIAL TO TARTS.

NO, NO-- VANILLA CUPCAKE IS A LITTLE FANTASY GIRL-- THE SWEETEST, MOST CHARMING LITTLE THING.
THIS TELEPHONE LOOKS JUST LIKE HER.
AND IT'S SCENTED WITH THE SOOTHING AROMA OF VANILLA-- LIKE ALL HER PRODUCTS.
TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

HERE. TAKE A WHIFF. SHE BRINGS OUT THE MOST LOVEABLE, VULNERABLE SIDE OF EVERYONE.
VANILLA CUPCAKE ™
A TRADEMARK OF ENTERTAINMENT CONCEPTS, LTD.
A SUBSIDIARY OF GODCORP
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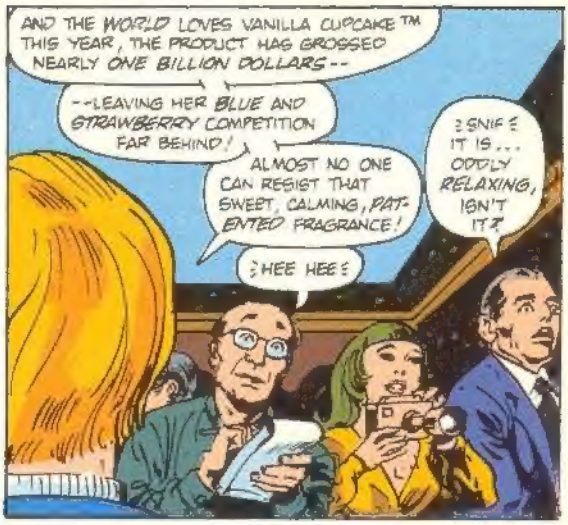
MEANWHILE, ON LONG ISLAND...
EEEYAAGHH
...WOBLINA STRANGELEGS ADDRESSES THE PRESS AT GODCORP HEADQUARTERS.
GODCORP LTD.
MEDEA SOUVLAKIS, A CONVICTED CHILD-MURDERESS, WAS HIRED AS PART OF GODCORP'S PIONEERING EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM FOR EX-OFFENDERS.
WE NEVER DREAMED SHE WOULD REPAY OUR GENEROSITY BY SLAUGHTERING TWO POLICEMEN AND ENDANGERING OTHER INNOCENT LIVES!
MANAGEMENT IS SHOCKED AND APPALLED BY MEDEA'S UNAUTHORIZED ACTIONS.

WE OFFER OUR CONDOLENCES TO THE SLAIN OFFICERS' FAMILIES -- AND HEREBY REMAND MEDEA TO THE CUSTODY OF THE POLICE.
LIES!! ALL LIES!! THEY PAID ME TO DO THIS COMPANY'S KILLING!!!
YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS, STRANGELEGS!! MOMMY DOESN'T FORGET!!!
:SIGH: HOW TRAGIC. WE HAD NO IDEA SHE WAS SO... UNSTABLE.

AND NOW, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, IF YOU'LL COME WITH ME...
...I WOULD LIKE TO CONCLUDE THIS BRIEFING ON A POSITIVE NOTE.

THE REPORTERS FOLLOW WOBLINA THROUGH THE DOOR ... INTO A VERITABLE OTHER UNIVERSE.
HELLO! I'M MEAD PACKER, HEAD OF GOODCORP'S LEISURE DIVISION -- AND YOU'VE JUST ENTERED THE WORLD OF VANILLA CUPCAKE™, A CHILD'S DREAM COME TRUE!
A GALAXY OF PRODUCT, SCENTED WITH THE UNIQUE VANILLA CUPCAKE™ FRAGRANCE!
AND THIS, OF COURSE, IS VANILLA CUPCAKE™ HERSELF -- THE SYMBOL OF FRIENDSHIP WITH ICING ON TOP TO CHILDREN THE WORLD OVER!
GOLLY-WOGS, UNCLE MEAD! ARE ALL THESE NICE PEOPLE HERE TO SEE ME? CUPCAKEY-KEEN!
HI, EVERYBODY! I LOVE YOU!!
VANILLA CUPCAKE
VANILLA CUPCAKE™
VANILLA CUPCAKE™ Notebook
VANILLA CUPCAKE™ LUNCH BOX
CRAYONS
VANILLA CUPCAKE™ CRAYONS
VITAMINS
PENCILS
VANILLA

VANILLA CUPCAKE ™
VANILLA CUPCAKE ™
WGRZ


AND THE WORLD LOVES VANILLA CUPCAKE ™ THIS YEAR, THE PRODUCT HAS GROSSED NEARLY ONE BILLION DOLLARS--
--LEAVING HER BLUE AND STRAWBERRY COMPETITION FAR BEHIND!
ALMOST NO ONE CAN RESIST THAT SWEET, CALMING, PATENTED FRAGRANCE!
:HEE HEE:
:SNIF: IT IS... ODDLY RELAXING, ISN'T IT?

VANILLA CUPCAKE ™, TELL THE REPORTERS ABOUT THE TRIP WE'RE GOING TO TAKE!
GOLLY-WOGS, YES, UNCLE MEAD!
I'M SO EXCITED! I'LL BE SEEING ALL MY FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD--IN PERSON!

WE'LL BE TRAVELING TO WASHINGTON--AND LONDON--AND PARIS--AND EVEN HOGOOM! THAT'S REAL FAR AWAY, YOU KNOW!
I'M EVEN GONNA GET A KISS FROM GENERAL YOUSAH ABULIK!
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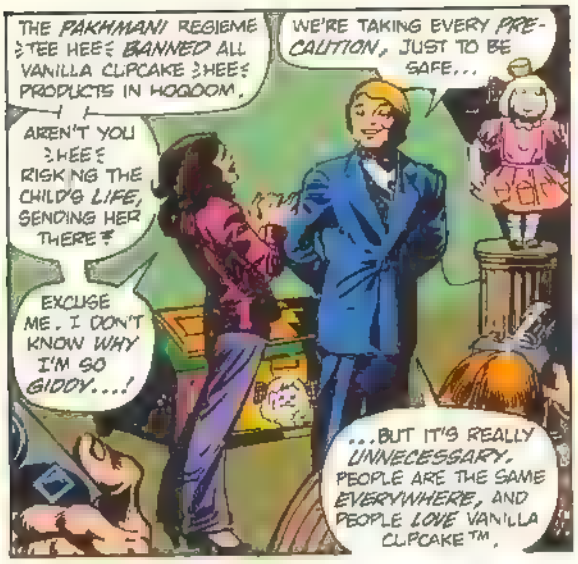
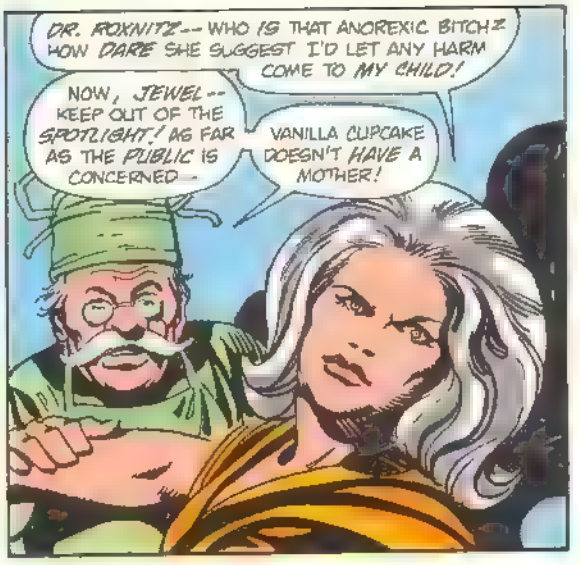
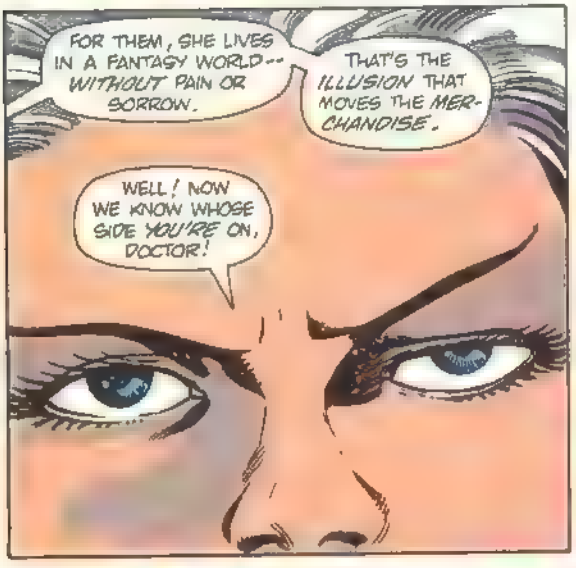
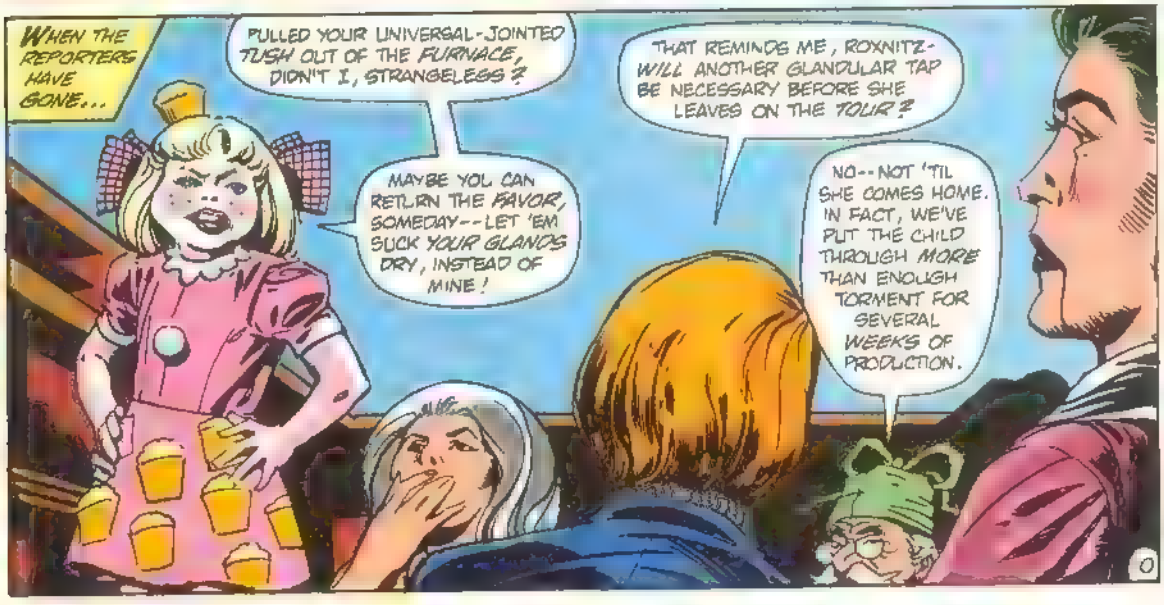
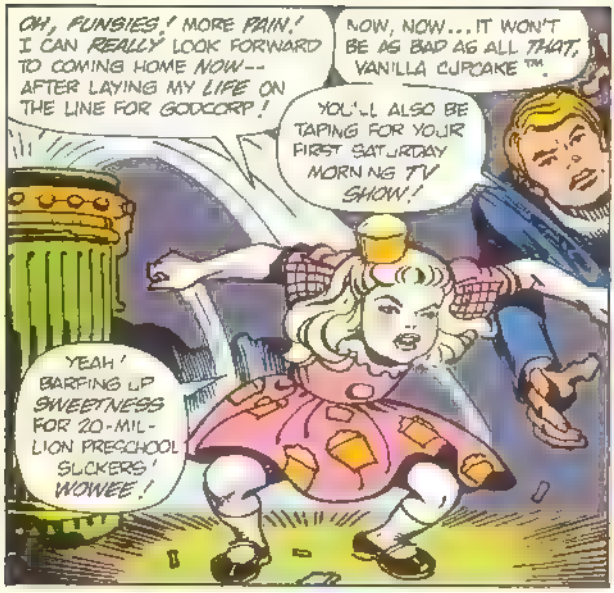

THE PAKHMAN! REGIEME ;TEE HEE; BANNED ALL VANILLA CUPCAKE ;HEE; PRODUCTS IN HOQOOM.
WE'RE TAKING EVERY PRE-CAUTION, JUST TO BE SAFE...
AREN'T YOU ;HEE; RISKING THE CHILD'S LIFE, SENDING HER THERE?
EXCUSE ME. I DON'T KNOW WHY I'M SO GIDDY....!
...BUT IT'S REALLY UNNECESSARY. PEOPLE ARE THE SAME EVERYWHERE, AND PEOPLE LOVE VANILLA CUPCAKE™.

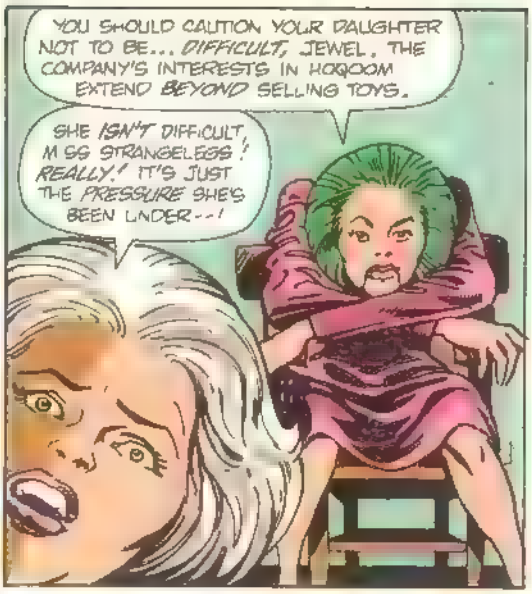

DR. ROXNITZ-- WHO IS THAT ANOREXIC BITCH? HOW DARE SHE SUGGEST I'D LET ANY HARM COME TO MY CHILD!
NOW, JEWEL-- KEEP OUT OF THE SPOTLIGHT! AS FAR AS THE PUBLIC IS CONCERNED--
VANILLA CUPCAKE DOESN'T HAVE A MOTHER!

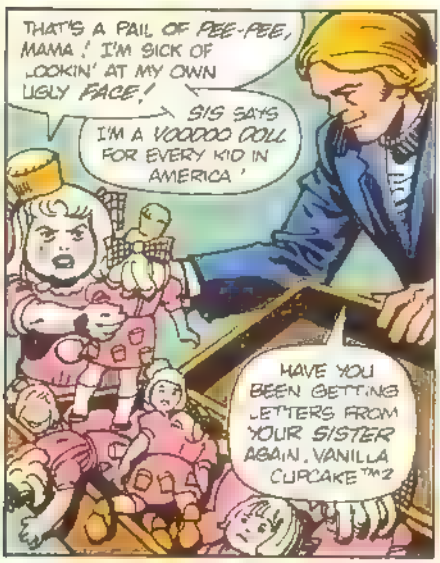

FOR THEM, SHE LIVES IN A FANTASY WORLD-- WITHOUT PAIN OR SORROW.
THAT'S THE ILLUSION THAT MOVES THE MER-CHANDISE.
WELL! NOW WE KNOW WHOSE SIDE YOU'RE ON, DOCTOR!

THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING. THERE WILL BE VANILLA CUPCAKE™ DOLLS AND COPIES OF HER ITINERARY FOR YOU AT THE FRONT GATE
TRY TO BE GENTLE WITH US AT SIX AND ELEVEN OKAY?


WHEN THE REPORTERS HAVE GONE...
PULLED YOUR UNIVERSAL-JOINTED TUSH OUT OF THE FURNACE, DIDN'T I, STRANGELEGS?
MAYBE YOU CAN RETURN THE FAVOR, SOMEDAY--LET 'EM SUCK YOUR GLANDS DRY, INSTEAD OF MINE!
THAT REMINDS ME, ROXNITZ-- WILL ANOTHER GLANDULAR TAP BE NECESSARY BEFORE SHE LEAVES ON THE TOUR?
NO--NOT 'TIL SHE COMES HOME. IN FACT, WE'VE PUT THE CHILD THROUGH MORE THAN ENOUGH TORMENT FOR SEVERAL WEEKS OF PRODUCTION.

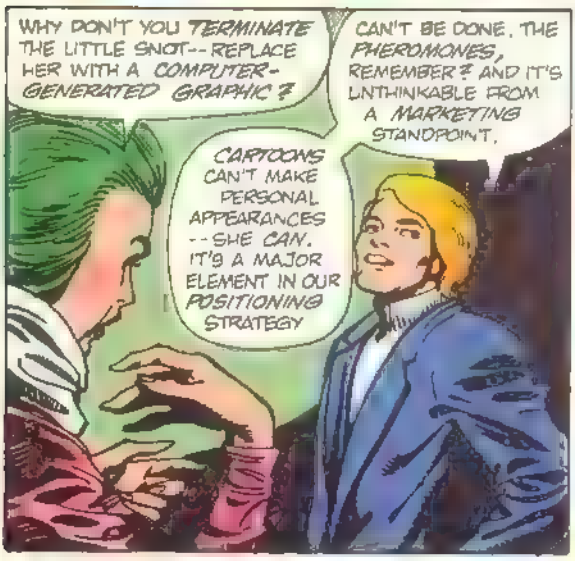

OH, FUNSIES! MORE PAIN! I CAN REALLY LOOK FORWARD TO COMING HOME NOW-- AFTER LAYING MY LIFE ON THE LINE FOR GODCORP!
NOW, NOW... IT WON'T BE AS BAD AS ALL THAT, VANILLA CUPCAKE ™.
YOU'LL ALSO BE TAPING FOR YOUR FIRST SATURDAY MORNING TV SHOW!
YEAH! BARFING UP SWEETNESS FOR 20-MILLION PRESCHOOL SUCKERS! WOWEE!

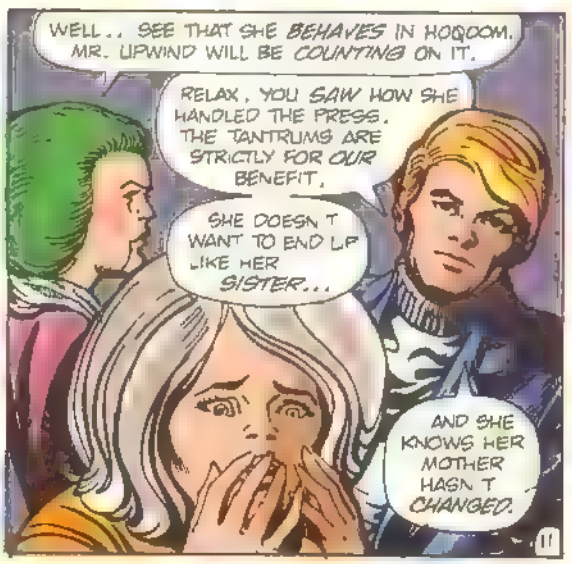

YOU SHOULD CAUTION YOUR DAUGHTER NOT TO BE... DIFFICULT, JEWEL. THE COMPANY'S INTERESTS IN HOOQOOM EXTEND BEYOND SELLING TOYS.
SHE ISN'T DIFFICULT, MISS STRANGELESS! REALLY! IT'S JUST THE PRESSURE SHE'S BEEN UNDER--!


THAT'S A PAIL OF PEE-PEE, MAMA! I'M SICK OF LOOKIN' AT MY OWN UGLY FACE!
SIS SAYS I'M A VOODOO DOLL FOR EVERY KID IN AMERICA!
HAVE YOU BEEN GETTING LETTERS FROM YOUR SISTER AGAIN, VANILLA CUPCAKE ™?

NONE O' YOUR BEESWAX! AN' STOP CALLING ME THAT!! MY NAME'S OPAL-- WITHOUT ™ AFTER IT!!!
HOW'D YOU LIKE IT IF I ALWAYS SAID ™ AFTER YOUR NAME?
POOKFACE PACKER-™!! POOKFACE PACKER-™!!!

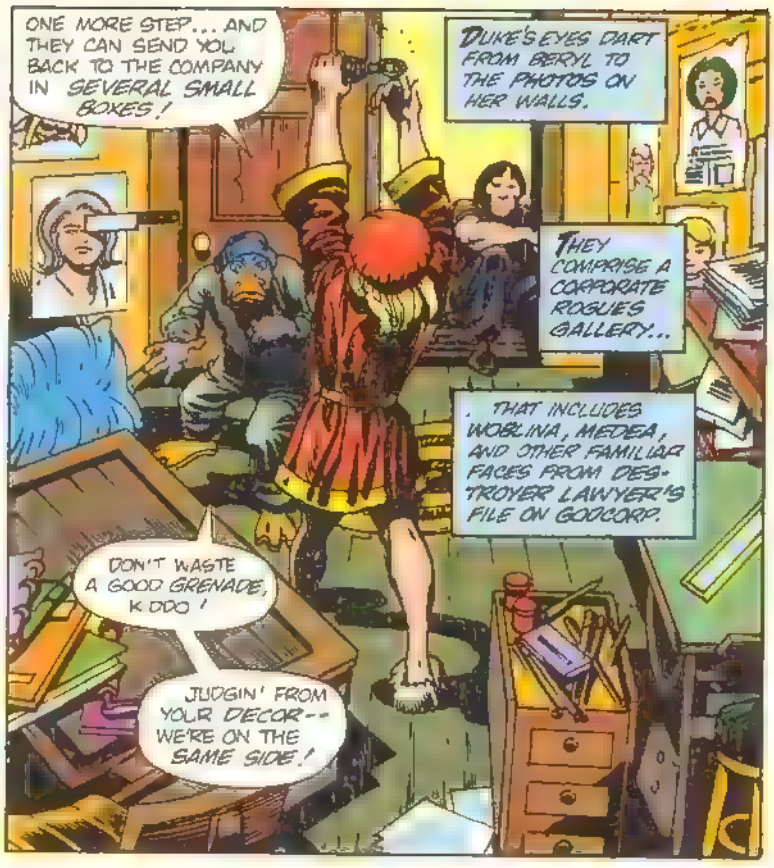
DON'T CRY, VA-- OPAL. YOU'RE A VERY VALUABLE PROPERTY, YOU KNOW...
WE HAVE TO PROTECT THE TRADEMARK...!


WHY DON'T YOU TERMINATE THE LITTLE SNOT-- REPLACE HER WITH A COMPUTER-GENERATED GRAPHIC?
CAN'T BE DONE. THE PHEROMONES, REMEMBER? AND IT'S UNTHINKABLE FROM A MARKETING STANDPOINT.
CARTOONS CAN'T MAKE PERSONAL APPEARANCES -- SHE CAN. IT'S A MAJOR ELEMENT IN OUR POSITIONING STRATEGY


WELL.. SEE THAT SHE BEHAVES IN HOOQOOM. MR. UPWIND WILL BE COUNTING ON IT.
RELAX. YOU SAW HOW SHE HANDLED THE PRESS. THE TANTRUMS ARE STRICTLY FOR OUR BENEFIT.
SHE DOESN'T WANT TO END UP LIKE HER SISTER...
AND SHE KNOWS HER MOTHER HASN'T CHANGED.

A SHORT WHILE LATER...
BERYL AND I HAVE SPOKEN ONLY RARELY. SHE IS A VERY PRIVATE PERSON--AND QUIET, LIKE ME.
UH-HUH.
BUT I DREAM ABOUT HER FREQUENTLY.
YES? WHO'S IT...?
BERYL? IT'S BRAD...FROM DOWNSTAIRS
LOOK I HAVE BROUGHT YOU A PRESENT--
--A TELEPHONE IN THE LIKENESS OF--
UNNNGH
THOK
GET THAT MONSTROSITY OUT OF MY SIGHT!! NOW!!
OR I'LL TEAR IT TO BITS WITH MY TEETH--
--AND SHOVE ITS EXTREMITIES DOWN YOUR SNIVELING THROAT!!
SHUT UP! GO AWAY! DIE!!
SLAM!
SO MUCH FOR ROMANCE. LET'S GO HOME BRAD
NO!! SOB I WOULDN'T OFFEND BERYL FOR ANYTHING--!! WHAT DID I DO WRONG??
BEATS ME I'LL ASK HER.
2

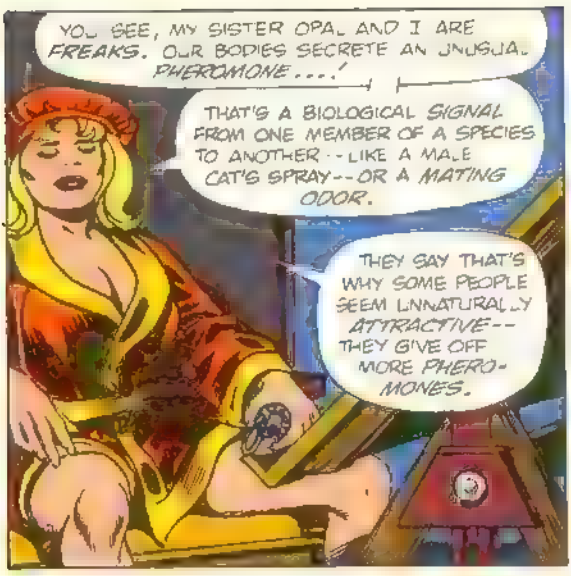
PARDON THE INTRUSION, LADY, BUT...
BASH
STOP RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE!

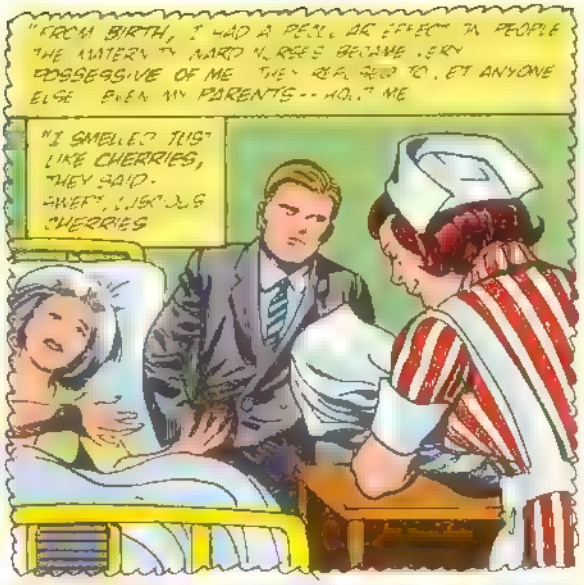

ONE MORE STEP... AND THEY CAN SEND YOU BACK TO THE COMPANY IN SEVERAL SMALL BOXES!
DUKE'S EYES DART FROM BERYL TO THE PHOTOS ON HER WALLS.
THEY COMPRISE A CORPORATE ROGUES GALLERY...
. THAT INCLUDES WOBLINA, MEDEA, AND OTHER FAMILIAR FACES FROM DESTROYER LAWYER'S FILE ON GODCORP.
DON'T WASTE A GOOD GRENADE, K'DOO!
JUDGIN' FROM YOUR DECOR-- WE'RE ON THE SAME SIDE!

:SOB: IT'S TRUE, BERYL .. I'LL ALWAYS BE ON YOUR SIDE... ANY SIDE YOU WANT...! :SOB:
D-DON'T PULL THE PIN... PLEASE?

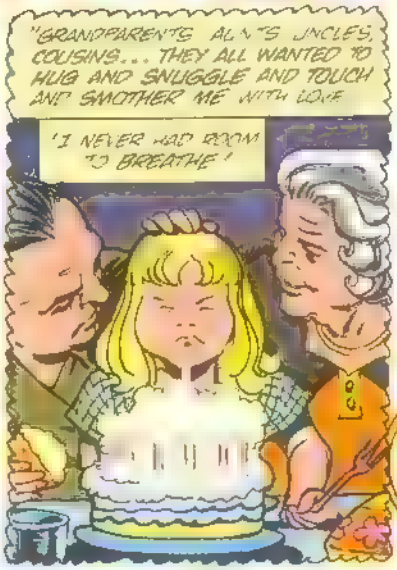
I-- I'M SORRY. I GO A LITTLE... BERSERK, I GUESS ...WHEN I SEE THOSE AWFUL IMAGES... OF MY SISTER,
VANILLA CUPCAKE IS YOUR SISTER--?
YOU HAVE A CELEBRITY IN THE FAMILY! HOW THRILLING!

IT'S NOT THRILLING, YOU NITWIT!
IT'S REVOLTING-- HUMILIATING!! YOU DON'T KNOW --NOBODY KNOWS, EXCEPT ME-- WHAT THEY PUT HER THROUGH--
--SO THEY CAN MAKE THEIR MILLIONS!
:nrpp:

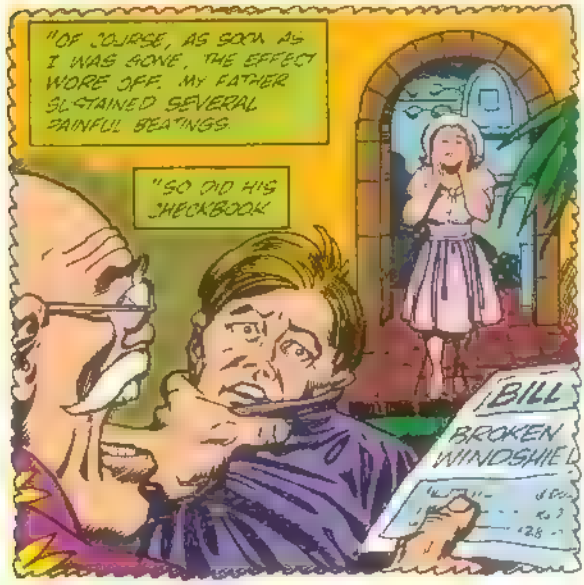

YOU SEE, MY SISTER OPAL AND I ARE FREAKS. OUR BODIES SECRETE AN UNUSUAL PHEROMONE....!
THAT'S A BIOLOGICAL SIGNAL FROM ONE MEMBER OF A SPECIES TO ANOTHER--LIKE A MALE CAT'S SPRAY--OR A MATING ODOR.
THEY SAY THAT'S WHY SOME PEOPLE SEEM UNNATURALLY ATTRACTIVE--THEY GIVE OFF MORE PHEROMONES.


"FROM BIRTH, I HAD A PECULIAR EFFECT ON PEOPLE. THE MATERNITY WARD NURSES BECAME VERY POSSESSIVE OF ME. THEY REFUSED TO LET ANYONE ELSE--EVEN MY PARENTS--HOLD ME.
"I SMELLED JUST LIKE CHERRIES, THEY SAID. SWEET, LUSCIOUS CHERRIES.

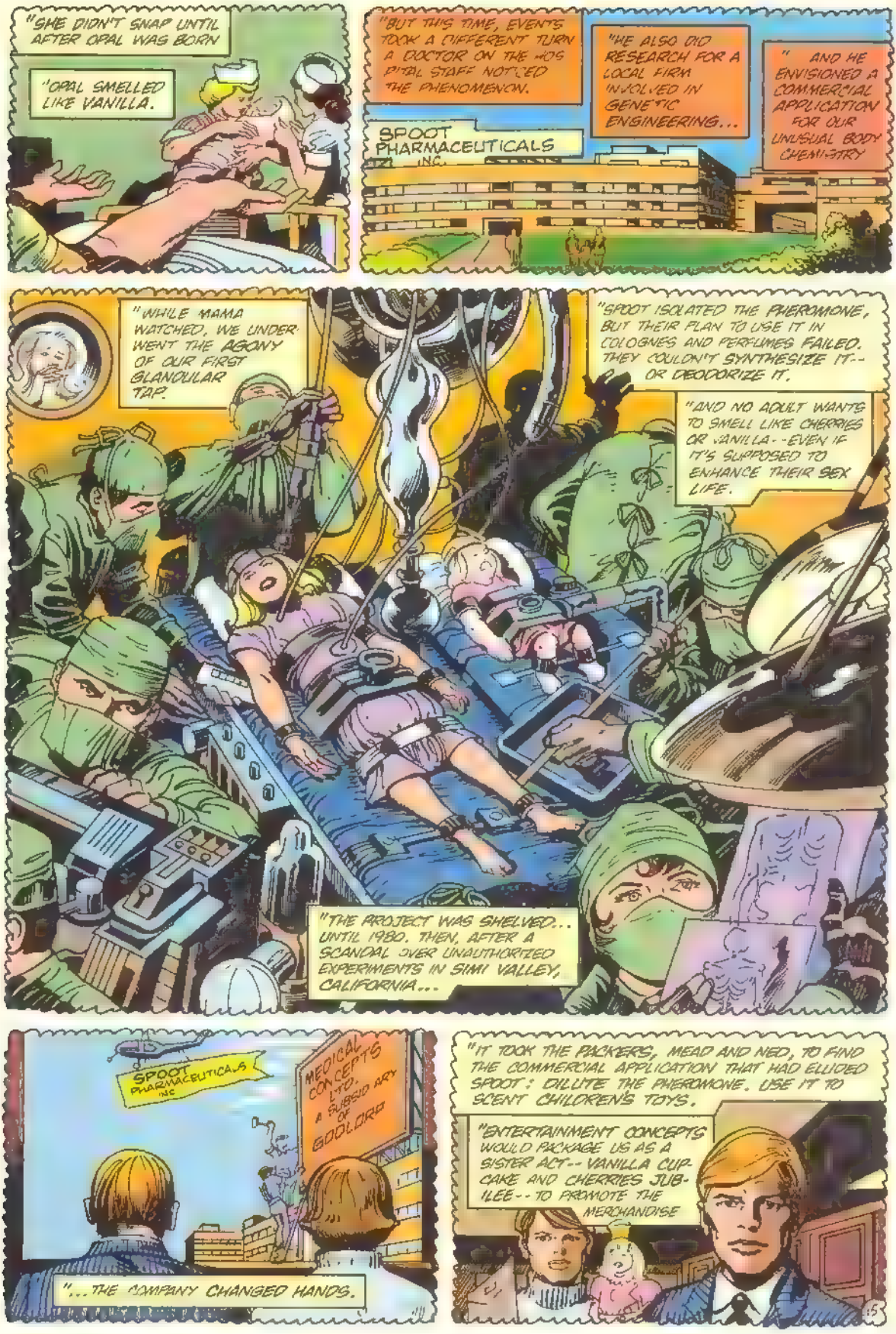
"AS I GOT OLDER THE PROBLEM GOT WORSE. AT SCHOOL, THE KIDS AND THE TEACHERS HOVERED AROUND ME CONSTANTLY--SNIFFING ME, PETTING ME.


"GRANDPARENTS, AUNTS, UNCLES, COUSINS... THEY ALL WANTED TO HUG AND SNUGGLE AND TOUCH AND SMOTHER ME WITH LOVE.
'I NEVER HAD ROOM TO BREATHE!

"ON THE OTHER HAND, I COULD DO NO WRONG. MAMA AND DAD COULDN'T BEAR TO SPANK ME. EVEN DELIBERATE ACTS OF DESTRUCTION ONLY EVOKED INDULGENT SMILES.
"I LIT UP A LOT OF FACES IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD


"OF COURSE, AS SOON AS I WAS GONE, THE EFFECT WORE OFF. MY FATHER SUSTAINED SEVERAL PAINFUL BEATINGS.
"SO DID HIS CHECKBOOK
BILL
BROKEN WINDSHIE

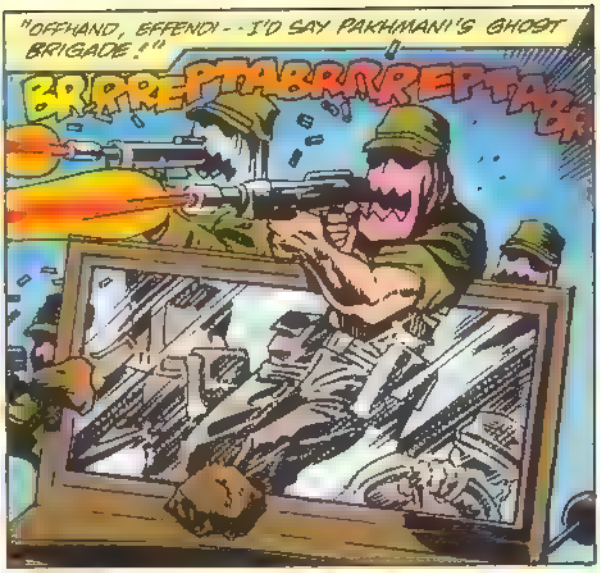
"WHEN MAMA GOT PREGNANT WITH OPAL, IT SENT HIM OVER THE EDGE--AND OUT THE DOOR.
MAMA HERSELF WAS STRONGER, THOUGH

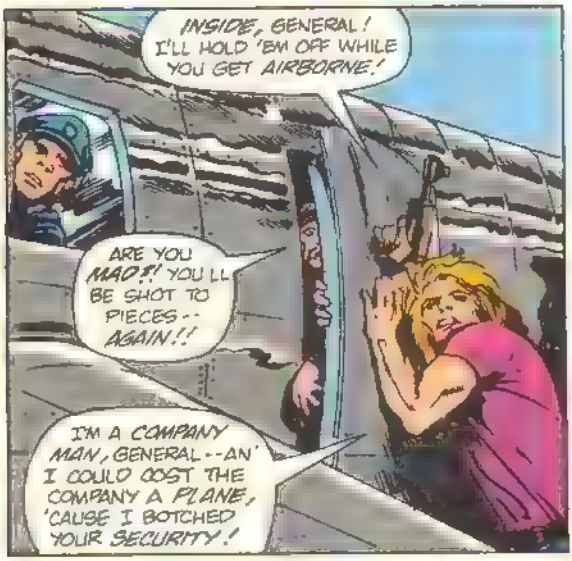

"SHE DIDN'T SNAP UNTIL AFTER OPAL WAS BORN
"OPAL SMELLED LIKE VANILLA.
"BUT THIS TIME, EVENTS TOOK A DIFFERENT TURN A DOCTOR ON THE HOS P'TAL STAFF NOTICED THE PHENOMENON.
"HE ALSO DID RESEARCH FOR A LOCAL FIRM INVOLVED IN GENETIC ENGINEERING...
" AND HE ENVISIONED A COMMERCIAL APPLICATION FOR OUR UNUSUAL BODY CHEMISTRY
SPOOT PHARMACEUTICALS INC.
"WHILE MAMA WATCHED, WE UNDERWENT THE AGONY OF OUR FIRST CLANDULAR TAP.
"SPOOT ISOLATED THE PHEROMONE, BUT THEIR PLAN TO USE IT IN COLOGNES AND PERFUMES FAILED. THEY COULDN'T SYNTHESIZE IT-- OR DEODORIZE IT.
"AND NO ADULT WANTS TO SMELL LIKE CHERRIES OR VANILLA--EVEN IF IT'S SUPPOSED TO ENHANCE THEIR SEX LIFE.
"THE PROJECT WAS SHELVED... UNTIL 1980. THEN, AFTER A SCANDAL OVER UNAUTHORIZED EXPERIMENTS IN SIMI VALLEY, CALIFORNIA...
SPOOT PHARMACEUTICALS INC
MEDICAL CONCEPTS LTD. A SUBSIDIARY OF GOOLORD
"...THE COMPANY CHANGED HANDS.
"IT TOOK THE PACKERS, MEAD AND NED, TO FIND THE COMMERCIAL APPLICATION THAT HAD ELUDED SPOOT: DILUTE THE PHEROMONE. USE IT TO SCENT CHILDREN'S TOYS.
"ENTERTAINMENT CONCEPTS WOULD PACKAGE US AS A SISTER ACT--VANILLA CUPCAKE AND CHERRIES JUBILEE--TO PROMOTE THE MERCHANDISE

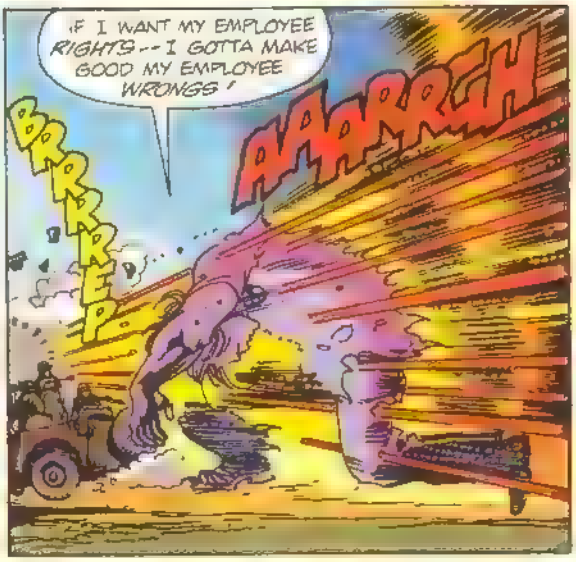
"DAD HAD LONG SINCE VANISHED, ALONG WITH ANY CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS... AND MAMA'S CONSCIENCE HAD GONE THE WAY OF HER SANITY.
"THE PACKERS WERE OFFERING FAME, SHOWBIZ, AND FINANCIAL SECURITY. MAMA LIKED THAT SHE SAID. JS UP FOR 'EN YEARS--
"--TEN YEARS OF THOSE EXCRUCIATING GLANDULAR TAPES! I WOULDN'T LET OPAL GO THROUGH THAT TORTURE. SO I KIDNAPPED HER! I STUPIDLY THOUGHT MY PHEROMONES WOULD KEEP EVEN THE POLICE FROM GETTING MAD AT ME.
"UNFORTUNATE FOREWARNED WAS FOREARMED. MEDICAL CONCEPTS DESIGNED A FILTRATION MASK THAT NEUTRALIZED THE EFFECT.
'MAMA AND GOODCORP GOT OPAL... AND RATHER THAN PRESSING CHARGES AGAINST ME.
"THEY SAVE ME IN A PRIVATE CELL IN THE LOON BIN.
'GOODCORP SAYS THE A THEY GOT "WAY" DEVICED IN SOME DRUGGED VE N'S CON THE HAVEN'T ME FAR ENOUGH THE ...
"I WASN'T EXACTLY A MODEL OF CO-OPERATION... BUT IN ONE OF THOSE RARE NIGHTS WHEN I HADN'T PUNCHED OUT ANY NURSES THEY GRANTED ME TV PRIVILEGES.
"THERE WAS OPAL--AS VANILLA CUPCAKE--SMILING AND SINGING ABOUT FRIENDSHIP WITH ICING ON TOP. MY BLOOD FROZE.
"ALL I COULD THINK ABOUT WAS HOW MUCH GLANDULAR SUBSTANCE IT TOOK TO SCENT AN ENTIRE PRODUCT LINE.
'THAT NIGHT, I MADE MY ESCAPE...
.. AND THEY'VE BEEN HUNTING ME EVER SINCE. THEY THOUGHT I'D COME CRAWLING BACK WEAK AND CONTRITE, BEGGING FOR MERCY. THAT'S WHAT GOODCORP EXPECTS FROM EVERYONE.
"BUT THEIR CRUELTIES ONLY HARDENED MY BODY AND MY RESOLVE."

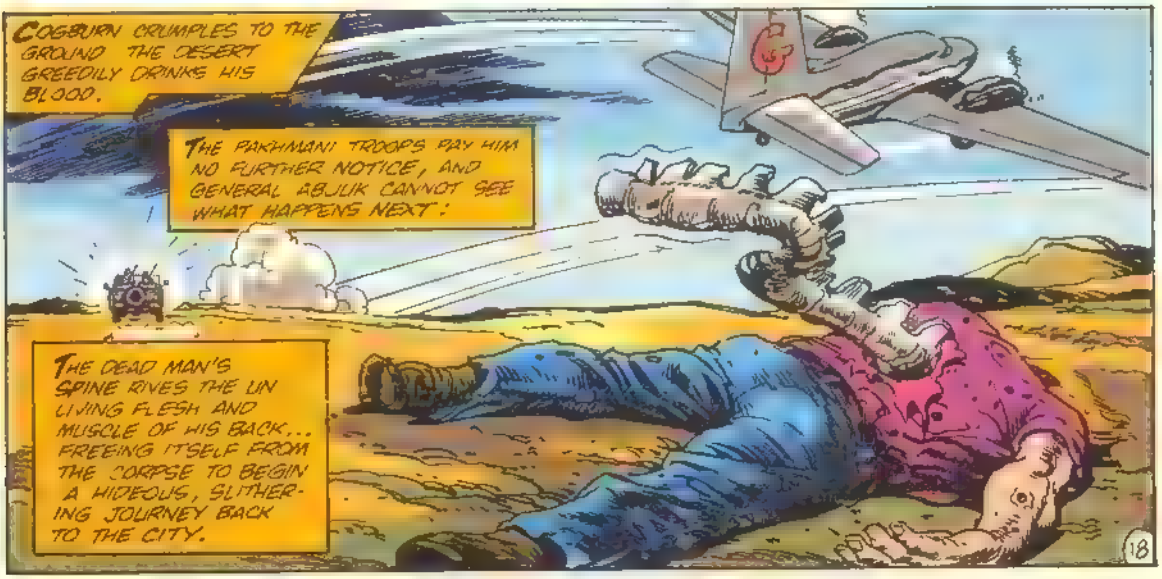
THEY ALSO LEFT A FEW PSYCHOLOGICAL SCARS. I'M A RAVING PARANOID -- AND PRONE TO OUTBURSTS OF VIOLENCE.
WHEN I SAW THAT TELEPHONE, I WAS SURE YOU'D BEEN SENT BY SOCORP TO MURDER ME.
THEY HAVEN'T TRIED ANYTHING FOR A WHILE.
BUT TONIGHT THEY ANNOUNCED THEY'RE SENDING OPAL ON A GOODWILL TOUR TO HOGOOM, A COUNTRY ON THE VERGE OF A VERY BLOODY REVOLUTION.
THEY'LL EXPECT ME TO BE ANGRY THEN... WANT TO ASSUAGE THAT ANGER WITH A BULLET.
LET THEM TRY.
LIKE IT OR NOT THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE THEIR SISTER ACT CHERRIES JUBILEE IS GOING TO HOGOOM!
AND MY LITTLE SISTER WILL BE FREE.. OR CERTAIN PERSONS WILL BE DEAD.
STILL ON MY SIDE, BOSS?
THOSE TWO-LEGGED SCUMBAGS KILLED A FRIEND OF MINE LAST. I COULDN'T DO MUCH FOR HIM.
NOW THEY'RE AFTER ME -- FOR REASONS TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION.
I GOT NOTHIN' TO LOSE BY TAKIN' THE OFFENSIVE. COUNT ME IN.
UH...
HOGOOM.
ON THE DESERT OUTSKIRTS OF THE CAPITAL, BOOSTER COGBURN PLIES HIS TECHNIQUE OF GENTLE PERSUASION ON GENERAL YAOUSAH ABUUK...!
THERE'S THE PLANE THAT'LL TAKE US TO SWITZERLAND, GENERAL -- FOR YOUR MEETING WITH MR UPWIND.
YOU SHOULD BE HONORED, GODCORP'S CHAIRMAN DOESN'T TAKE TIME FOR EVERY YELLOW-BELLIED TERRORIST, Y'KNOW!
HEY! YOU PAY ATTENTION, GENERAL!
I SAW YOU RIDDLED WITH BULLETS.. I SAW YOU FALL 23 STORIES AND LAND ON YOUR HEAD...!
PARTY ANIMAL
YOU CANNOT BE ALIVE, MR COGBURN. THEREFORE, I PAY YOU NO HEED.
7

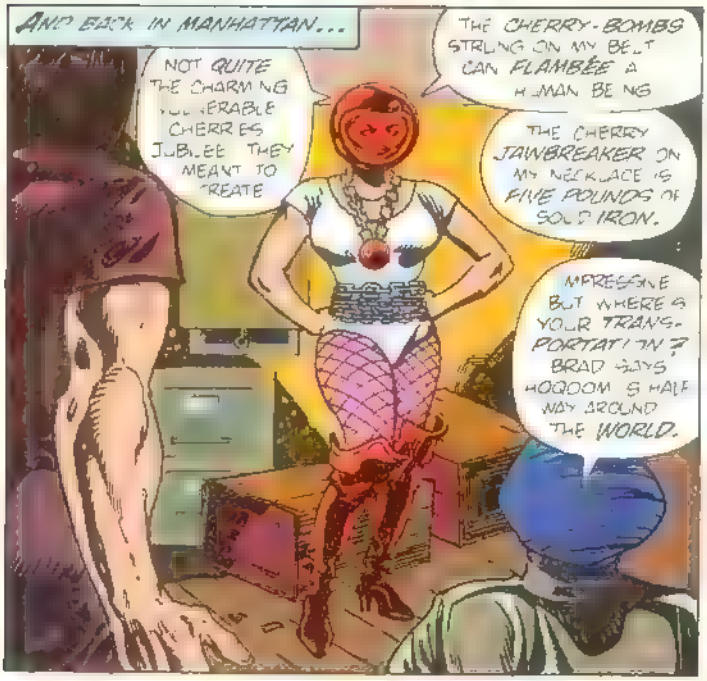
ANYTHING YOU SAY, GENERAL -- AS LONG AS YOU NEED OL' BETSY, HERE.
NOW, GET MOVIN'! LOOKS LIKE WE'RE IN FOR A NOISY SEND-OFF!
VROOOM
PARTY ANIMAL
WH-WHAT IS IT? WHO'S COMING--?!

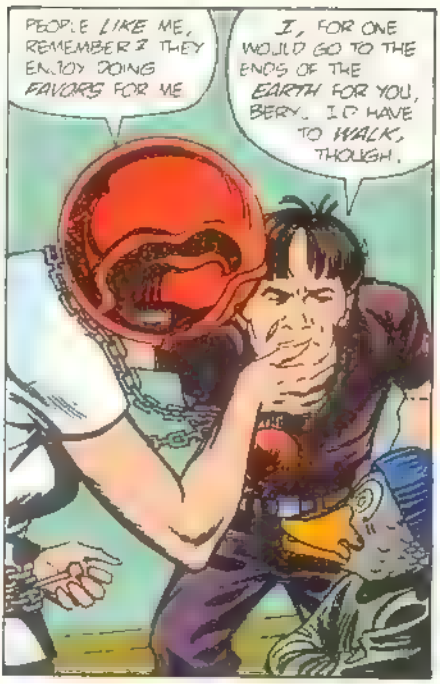

"OFFHAND, EFFENDI -- I'D SAY PAKHMANI'S GHOST BRIGADE!"
BRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

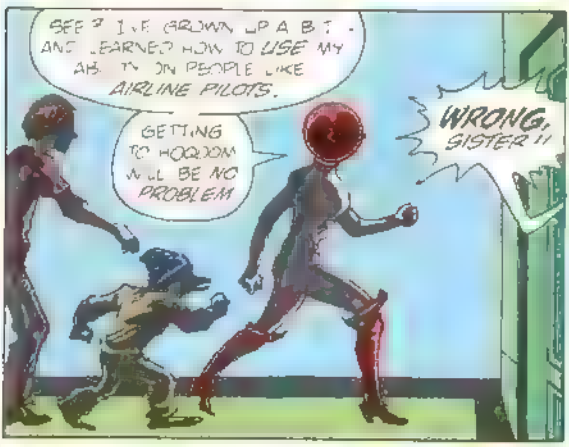

INSIDE, GENERAL! I'LL HOLD 'EM OFF WHILE YOU GET AIRBORNE!
ARE YOU MAD?! YOU'LL BE SHOT TO PIECES -- AGAIN!!
I'M A COMPANY MAN, GENERAL -- AN' I COULD COST THE COMPANY A PLANE, 'CAUSE I BOTCHED YOUR SECURITY!


IF I WANT MY EMPLOYEE RIGHTS -- I GOTTA MAKE GOOD MY EMPLOYEE WRONGS!
BRRRRRRRP
AAARRGH


COGBURN CRUMPLES TO THE GROUND THE DESERT GREEDILY DRINKS HIS BLOOD.
THE PAKHMANI TROOPS PAY HIM NO FURTHER NOTICE, AND GENERAL ABJUK CANNOT SEE WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:
THE DEAD MAN'S SPINE RIVES THE UN LIVING FLESH AND MUSCLE OF HIS BACK... FREEING ITSELF FROM THE CORPSE TO BEGIN A HIDEOUS, SLITHERING JOURNEY BACK TO THE CITY.


AND BACK IN MANHATTAN...
NOT QUITE THE CHARMING ...LERABLE CHERRES JUBILEE THEY MEANT TO CREATE
THE CHERRY-BOMBS STRUNG ON MY BELT CAN FLAMBÉE A HUMAN BEING
THE CHERRY JAWBREAKER ON MY NECKLACE IS FIVE POUNDS OF SOLID IRON.
IMPRESSIVE BUT WHERE'S YOUR TRANSPORTATION? BRAD SAYS HOOOOM IS HALF WAY AROUND THE WORLD.


PEOPLE LIKE ME, REMEMBER? THEY ENJOY DOING FAVORS FOR ME
I, FOR ONE WOULD GO TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH FOR YOU, BERY. I'D HAVE TO WALK, THOUGH.


SEE? I'VE GROWN UP A BIT - AND LEARNED HOW TO USE MY ABILITIES ON PEOPLE LIKE AIRLINE PILOTS.
GETTING TO HOOOOM WILL BE NO PROBLEM
WRONG, SISTER!!

YOU GOT A LARGE PROBLEM
...AN I'M IT!!
:GASP: A COSBURN!

THOK
THOK
DUCK! THINK FAST!

NO SWEAT SWEETS!
AT THIS GAME, I'M PRACTICALLY TELEPATHIC!

BUT SUDDENLY... AT THE WINDOW...
KRASH!

SHOULD'A KEPT YER EYES ON ME, HONEY-PIE!
WE KNEW YOU WERE NO PUSHOVER--
--AN' WE KNOW HOW EAGILY YOU MAKE ALLIES! THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T COME ALONE!
YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN! YOU'RE THE ONLY PERSON I'VE EVER SEEN ARRIVE --EN MASSE!!
:GNNGPH:
WELL, WHADDAYA KNOW, THE DUCK, TOO!
AND A WITNESS!
WE GOT US SOME HEAVY DEATH TO DEAL OUT!
I'LL SPEAR THE BIRD! YOU GUYS :MEH: DIVVY UP THE GIRL!!
HOW TO BE YOUR OWN BEST FRIEND!

SPRING, 1968
THE STARLINGS
CHAPTER II
CREATED AND WRITTEN BY JERRY SIEGEL
ILLUSTRATED BY VAL MAYERIK
CARRIE McCARTHY, LETTERER
JANICE COHEN, CO-ORIST
WHEN IRMA ZANE WAS ATTACKED BY WOULD-BE RAPISTS, A STRANGELY GLOWING MAN DESCENDED FROM SPACE TO RESCUE HER.
THE ALIEN EXERTED AN UNEARTHLY ATTRACTION UPON IRMA. HE WANTED HER. AND SHE WAS DRAWN TO HIM.
ON SOME PLANE BEYOND ORDINARY REALITY, THE EARTH-GIRL AND HER STAR-SPAWNED SEDUCER CONJOINED.
BUT WHEN THE LOVING ENDED HE WAS GONE, LEAVING IRMA TO WONDER... HAD IT ALL BEEN A MAD HALLUCINATION?

SHE HAS WONDERED ABOUT LITTLE ELSE IN THE MONTHS SINCE....'
LOOK AT THEM ALL... SO NORMAL! EXCEPT ME!
NOT ONE OF THEM HAS BEEN LOVED AND ABANDONED...BY AN ALIEN. ONLY ME!
OR MAYBE... I'VE JUST LOST MY MIND.
NIXON PICKS AGNEW FOR VP
SOME DAYS LATER...
THE SYMPTOMS YOU'RE SUFFERING ARE ORDINARY MORNING SICKNESS. YOU'RE PREGNANT, IRMA.
WHO IS THE FATHER? WILL HE MARRY YOU?
NO, I DON'T THINK SO...
WANT TO TELL ME ABOUT IT?
YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME.
I'VE BEEN YOUR FAMILY DOCTOR FOR YEARS, IRMA. YOU CAN TRUST ME
IT WAS...A GLOWING BEING...FROM OUTER SPACE. HE KILLED TWO MEN WHO TRIED TO RAPE ME... AND THEN...
...HE MADE LOVE TO ME...AND HE VANISHED.
CRAIG!
Y-YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, DO YOU?
SURELY I DO. EVERY WORD.
AFTER IRMA DEPARTS, SOOTHED AND REASSURED...
THAT'S THE COCK-AND-BULL STORY SHE FED ME, JOHN.
THE LITTLE FOOL IS LYING TO PROTECT THE REAL FATHER!
2

AND SO, WHEN IRMA RETURNS HOME...
YOU'RE NO BETTER THAN THOSE HIPPIES-- WITH THEIR LOVE-INS IN THE PARKS. PUNISH HER JOHN -- FOR SHAMING US.
"SPACE MAN!" IN A P.G.S EYE.
GET THE HELL OUT OF MY HOUSE, YOU LYING LITTLE WHORE--
--AND DON'T COME BACK!!
I TOLD THE TRUTH! I SWEAR I TOLD THE TRUTH--!
UNLESS... DEAR GOD... AM I LYING TO MYSELF, TOO?
IRMA SPENDS THE NIGHT IN A MOTEL. THE NEXT DAY, HER MONEY GONE, SHE APPLIES FOR ASSISTANCE...
WE HAVE A PLACE FOR GIRLS LIKE YOU TO STAY 'TIL THE BABY IS BORN. AFTER THAT...
I'LL GET ALONG.
COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
MARCH, 1969: IRMA'S "BLESSED EVENT" ARRIVES IN A HOME FOR UNWED MOTHERS. SHE NAMES THE CHILD ROBERT.
YOU WORRIED YOURSELF SICK FOR NOTHING, IRMA. HE'S PERFECTLY NORMAL.
HOW CAN I BE SURE... KNOWING HIS FATHER CAME FROM ANOTHER WORLD...?
UHM... IF YOU SAY SO, MAN...!
3.

WEEKS LATER, IRMA IS AGAIN ON HER OWN. SHE RENTS A CHEAP ROOM, PLACES THE BABY IN A DAY-CARE, AND TAKES A JOB BAGGING GROCERIES..
THAT POOR GRL!
SOME KLUTZ, HUH?
THE SUPERMARKET MANAGER SPOTS IRMA'S DIFFICULTIES...
OBOY. HERE COMES "HOT-HANDS" FEENEY TO LEND A HELPFUL SWEATY PALM...!
IRMA! ARE YOU OKAY-?
HERE...LET ME HELP YOU!
BASTARD! HE'S COPPING A FREE FEEL—!
YAAAGH
KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF, YOU PIG!!!
WITH N THE HOUR, WHEN FEENEY REGAINS THE CAPA-CITY TO SPEAK, IRMA IS FIRED.
4.

THAT NIGHT...
BAM BAM
;GROANE I KNOW, MRS. FLANAGAN.
YOU WANT THE RENT. RIGHT?
BY THE END O' THE WEEK--OR I WANT YOU AN' YER BRAT OUTTA HERE!
BAM
IRMA HURRIEDLY FINDS ANOTHER JOB...
SCREW, SCREW, SCREW. SEE IRMA SCREW.
GOD, IS THIS BORING!!
I HATE THIS JOB-- BUT I'M TRAPPED, TRAPPED, TRAPPED--
--SO ROBERT AND I WON'T STARVE, STARVE, STARVE--!
TO ESCAPE THE DRABNESS OF HER EXISTENCE, IRMA TURNS DESPERATELY TO THE PAPERBACK ROMANCES SHE ADORES...!
JANE
IT'S HIS FAULT! THE GLOWING MAN!
IF I HADN'T BEEN STUPID ENOUGH TO YIELD TO HIS DESIRE AND MINE...!
I COULD WRITE THINGS LIKE THIS.
I'LL TRY! WHY NOT?
5.

SKIPPING LUNCH FOR THREE WEEKS, IRMA SAVES ENOUGH TO ACQUIRE A BATTERED SECONDHAND TYPEWRITER.
NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, SHE MERCILESSLY PUNISHES THE KEYBOARD—AND HERSELF—UNTIL DAWN.

INEVITABLY, HER DAY JOB SUFFERS...
ZANE! WAKE UP!! ANOTHER MISTAKE LIKE THAT, AN' YOU'RE THROUGH!
I--I'M SORRY. I'LL BE MORE CAREFUL.

DAMN YOU! YOU'VE MADE MY LIFE A LIVING HELL!
I'M PAYING EVERY MINUTE OF EVERY DAY FOR THOSE FEW MOMENTS OF ECSTASY!

SUMMER PASSES INTO FALL. IRMA CONTINUES WORKING DAYS AND WRITING BY NIGHT, UNTIL...
IT'S DONE. AND IT'S GOOD--I KNOW IT IS.
IF I DO WITHOUT LUNCH TOMORROW, I CAN AFFORD TO PUT THE MANUSCRIPT IN THE MAIL.

FOR WEEKS, THERE IS NO WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER. THEN, JUST AS IRMA IS ABOUT TO GIVE UP HOPE...
OH MY GOD...!
THEY BOUGHT IT!

THE EDITOR SAYS YOUR MOTHER'S A GREAT NEW TALENT, ROBERT!
HE WANTS ANOTHER BOOK AS FAST AS I CAN WRITE IT!

IRMA ZANE'S SUCCESS IS ASTONISHING, METEORIC! BOOKS POUR FROM HER BRAIN--THREE IN THE NEXT YEAR--AS SHE LIES AGAIN AND AGAIN ABOUT THE GLORIES OF LOVE.
BEFORE HER SON IS 20 MONTHS OLD, SHE MAKES THE DOWNPAYMENT ON A MANSION IN BEL AIR, CALIFORNIA.
AND NO SOONER HAS SHE MOVED IN THAN THE MEDIA ARRIVE, CLAMORING TO VIEW THIS NEW QUEEN OF PAPERBACK ROMANCE.
MISS ZANE, YOUR CRITICS CALL YOU A CROSS BETWEEN JACKIE SUSANN AND BARBARA CARTLAND. THEY SAY YOU WRITE TRASH FOR MONEY.
HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF?
RICH!
MY BOOKS SELL IN THE MILLIONS! MY BANK ACCOUNT WOULD MAKE A TYCOON ENVIOUS!
I'M LIVING MY READERS GLAMOROUS FANTASIES --AND THEY LOVE ME FOR IT!
I THINK YOU'VE TAKEN UP ENOUGH OF MY TIME, MISS-- WHATEVER YOUR NAME IS.
PLEASE LEAVE. I HAVE WRITING TO DO.

LATE THAT NIGHT, IRMA LOOKS IN ON HER SLEEPING CHILD....
"TRASH!" WHY SHOULD I CARE WHAT THE CRITICS THINK? WHY SHOULD--
≥GASP≤ ROBERT--!!
HE'S GLOWING--- LIKE HIS FATHER GLOWED--!!
DOES IT MEAN... ROBERT WILL SOMEDAY HAVE HIS FATHER'S INCREDIBLE ABILITIES?
HAVE I GIVEN BIRTH-- TO SOMETHING— ALIEN?
THE GLOWING FLICKERS, DIMS, AND THEN IT IS GONE.
I PRAY THAT ACCURSED GLOWING NEVER RETURNS...!
IF IT DOES...GOD HELP THE BOTH OF US!
THE GLOWING WILL RETURN-- AND BOTH IRMA AND ROBERT WILL BE FORCED TO CONFRONT THE UNEARTHLY DESTINY OF...
STARLING
THE WONDER AND THE TERROR CONTINUE NEXT ISSUE!